

MACRO

Macomb Area Communities for Regional Opportunities

FOUNDING MEMBERS: Clinton Township • Macomb County • Shelby Township • Sterling Heights • Utica • Warren

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Regional communities team up, leading the way for service sharing and cost efficiencies

MACOMB COUNTY COMMUNITIES FORM MACRO TO DISCUSS SERVICE SHARING

STERLING HEIGHTS – A new regional task force consisting of Macomb County's largest communities has formed to research and, where feasible, implement service sharing concepts to further reduce the costs of providing municipal services.

The charter members of MACRO, the Macomb Area Communities for Regional Opportunities task force, include elected and appointed officials from Clinton Township, Shelby Township, Sterling Heights, Warren, Utica and the county of Macomb. The five task force municipalities, accounting for more than 50% of the county's population, will meet monthly with representatives from Macomb County to discuss and possibly implement service sharing practices. More cities and townships are expected to join the group in the coming months.

While several members of the cost saving consortium had started informal consolidation discussions over the past few years--some even enacting agreements and sharing services--the group decided to establish a formal partnership to discuss service consolidation efforts in light of unprecedented financial challenges that are threatening to compromise or eliminate the delivery of core public services. The task force has met twice to begin exploring ideas including but not limited to: parks and recreation services, library services, building and inspection services, police and fire services, joint

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training programs, purchasing cooperatives, facility and equipment maintenance, and information technology services, among others.

In his “State of the State” message, Gov. Rick Snyder stated that local jurisdictions, both municipal and school, must move to service consolidation to better serve the public and realize economies of scale.

“Prior to the governor’s inauguration and ‘Reinventing Michigan’ message, Macomb County communities were leading the way in intergovernmental discussions regarding service sharing,” Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel said, noting that, “by working together, our cities and county will be well positioned to meet the potential mandate by the state that future distributions of revenue sharing and other forms of state aid be tied to efficiencies achieved through intergovernmental cooperation.”

Warren Mayor James Fouts indicated that, in these times of financial crisis, government agencies must be “innovative and efficient, working together to preserve services and quality of life while reducing expenditures. Furthermore, according to Gov. Snyder, future revenue sharing may be tied to service sharing efforts.”

“This economic crisis does not stop at municipal borders and has affected cities across the country,” Sterling Heights Mayor Richard Nottle said. “As Sterling Heights has demonstrated over the past few years, solutions will require the establishment of strong partnerships and new ways of service delivery. I believe MACRO will help us further achieve our goals of reducing costs and providing quality services to our residents.”

According to Utica Mayor Jackie Noonan, “While service sharing will not solve all economic and operational woes, it is one of many options that must be considered in a more meaningful way.”

The task force will play an important role in continuing partnerships established in Shelby Township, according to Task Force Member and Shelby Township Supervisor Richard Stathakis.

“Our Board of Trustees has already completed a shared services groundbreaking deal with Rochester Hills, but this is only a start. For the past year, I have been pushing for more community leaders to be involved in establishing regional partnerships that create dollar synergies among cities and townships that will result in cost savings without diminishing services. Business as usual is not an option and I believe that MACRO will creatively help Shelby Township achieve our objectives of no new taxes, no reduction in essential services, and a balanced budget with minimal use of reserves.”

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Clinton Township Supervisor Robert Cannon concluded adding, “MACRO shares a common goal in that it wants to reduce costs to each municipality and improve services by identifying models and implementing best practices used in other parts of the country.”

Cannon said that MACRO members will report back to their respective elective bodies periodically or as new concepts require approval.

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